

with the Contract With America. We debated 31 bills for 100 days. Three were signed into law.

Then, the Republicans were 1 month late with their budget resolution; late with their appropriation bills. We find ourselves with a stopgap spending bill going through, and then they pushed through the Medicare rate increase on seniors and the tax break for the wealthy and said to the President, "Take it or leave it."

Mr. Speaker, I am saying to the President, "Leave it. Veto these Republican plans to raise Medicare premiums and provide tax cuts for wealthy Americans."

We are now facing a shutdown of the Government because Speaker GINGRICH's political strategy calls for this High Noon scenario. This is a complete abdication of responsibility by the leadership in this House of Representatives. It is shameful. It will penalize American families. If this is the Gingrich revolution, keep it.

STOP THE EXCUSES AND BALANCE THE BUDGET

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I understand that the President met with his Cabinet yesterday to discuss the logistics of shutting down the Government. I have a suggestion for the President—instead of meeting with your Cabinet, maybe you could make some time to meet with congressional leaders to discuss balancing the budget.

Mr. Speaker, as a candidate, Bill Clinton promised to balance the budget. While President, he has stated that he supports a plan that balances the budget in 5, 7, 9, even 10 years. But yet he has shown no leadership, has presented no plan, and has given us no choice.

The Republican majority has a plan to balance the budget in 7 years. It is time for the Clinton Democrats to stop the excuses and balance the budget. It is the right thing to do for our children's future.

THE PRESIDENT, THE SPEAKER, AND WARTY BLIGGENS

(Mr. OBEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, the silly flap about whether the President paid enough attention to the Speaker on Air Force One reminds me of a poem written by my favorite philosopher, Archy the Cockroach.

It goes as follows:

i met a toad
the other day by the name
of warty bliggens
he was sitting under
a toadstool
feeling contented
he explained that when the cosmos

was created
that toadstool was especially
planned for his personal
shelter from sun and rain
thought out and prepared
for him

do not tell me
said warty bliggens
that there is not a purpose
in the universe
the thought is blasphemy

a little more
conversation revealed
that warty bliggens
considers himself to be
the center of the said
universe
the earth exists
to grow toadstools for him
to sit under
the sun to give him light
by day, and the moon
and wheeling constellations
to make beautiful
the night all for the sake of
warty bliggens

WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE IN BOSNIA?

(Mr. METCALF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, in the next few days this House will make a momentous decision: Shall the United States commit ground troops to Bosnia? The President has the constitutional power to commit troops, but Congress has the constitutional duty to fund that commitment or to refuse to fund that commitment. Before we make that decision, the President has an obligation to tell the Congress what is the objective, what vital United States interests are threatened.

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What will those troops do to protect any vital United States interest if they are threatened there? Just as one Member of this Congress, I for one will not vote any money to send ground troops to Bosnia until those questions are satisfactorily answered.

KEYSTONE KOPS MENTALITY

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, here in Newtland a true Keystone Kops mentality has taken full control. The zealots have lost all reality. They tell America to pay any price, even default in order to accomplish their agenda.

Yes, we have Chief NEWT and a zillion little Keystone zealots chasing each other around the Capitol. The House Republicans cannot agree with the Senate Republicans. This morning the House Republicans cannot even agree with each other about what their agenda is or their schedule is, but they are willing to put the full faith and credit of the most important Nation in the entire world on the line and risk that despite our history of paying our debts.

Let them listen to one of their own Republican colleagues, the gentleman

from New York who said, and quote: I think the whole thing is nuts. Nobody knows the potential impact. If you play this hand and lose, you can really do a lot of damage. It is like threatening to explode a time bomb in your own backyard. That is the mentality that controls: Gingrichism, excellence in pursuit of error.

ENERGY SECRETARY O'LEARY

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, Energy Secretary O'Leary wasted over 43,000 taxpayer dollars to compile an enemies list which included some Members of this Chamber. If any Member of Congress had taken the taxpayers' dollars and spent them in such a blatant self-serving manner, they would have been run out of office, and rightfully so.

At a time when we are making tough choices to balance the budget, it is the height of irresponsibility for Secretary O'Leary to be wasting money like that.

One of the targets of her investigation, Senate Majority Leader DOLE, said the whole thing was a shocking waste of taxpayer dollars.

I was also a target of this investigation. I think it is an abuse of the American taxpayers themselves. After all, this administration has been mired in one ethical scandal after another: Whitewater, Travelgate, Webb Hubbell, Ron Brown. The list goes on and on.

While the administration warns of an impending financial default which could put 800,000 Government workers on unemployment, it is clear that there has been an ethical default of almost 3 years. It is time for Secretary O'Leary to find gainful employment outside the U.S. Government.

ACCESS TO THE SPEAKER'S OFFICE

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, the Wall Street Journal says it all this morning: Donald Jones, a wealthy backer of House Speaker NEWT GINGRICH, has taken the concept of being a Washington insider to new heights. The Wisconsin telecommunications entrepreneur enjoyed unusual access to the Speaker as House leaders fine-tuned a sweeping telecommunications bill earlier this year.

This gentleman has millions or billions of dollars' worth of financial interests before this House, and we find out that he spoke often 2 to 3 hours daily with the Speaker of the House.

This is the way Mr. Jones describes his access: I participate as an observer. I interpret and I analyze the subtleties of the meeting for the Speaker.

In the end, on this bill, this bill treated both the Internet and cable